

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated March 1, 2004, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on June 1, 2004. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-28 and 30-40 are pending in the application and remain pending following entry of this response.

Claims 1-28 and 30-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by *Wical* (US 5,953,718). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The present invention is directed to front-end weight factor search criteria. Users input search expressions including one or more search terms each having one or more weight criteria which, in turn, have corresponding user designated score modifiers. In this way, users are able to dictate the relevancy of results on the basis of the search expression itself. Accordingly, the present invention provides a novel query syntax and content in the form of weight criteria and corresponding user designated score modifiers. In contrast, *Wical* does not provide for a novel query syntax or content, but rather provides a (presumptively) novel infrastructure for processing conventional queries. *Wical* states that "it is desirable to construct a search and retrieval system that is not highly dependent upon the exact words chosen for the query, but that generates a similar response for different queries that have similar meanings." (Column 1, lines 52-57.) The search and retrieval system of *Wical* generates a research document that infers an answer to a query for multiple documents. The search and retrieval system includes point of view gists for a plurality of documents. A point of view gist provides a synopsis for a corresponding document with a slant toward a topic. To generate a research document, the search and retrieval system processes a query to identify one or more topics related to the query. The search and retrieval system selects point of view gists, for multiple documents, with a slant towards topics related to the query. (See, Abstract.)

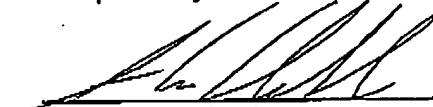
In no way, does *Wical* teach, show or suggest a search expression including one or more search terms having one or more weight criteria, wherein the one or more weight criteria include a user designated score modifier. An example input query of

Wical is shown in column 9, line 39. As shown, the input query includes neither weight criteria for any of the terms, nor a user designated score modifier for corresponding weight criteria.

During a telephonic interview with the Examiner and the primary Examiner on May 19, 2004, the attorney for the Applicants argued that *Wical* does not teach, show or suggest a search expression including one or more search terms having one or more weight criteria, wherein the one or more weight criteria include a user designated score modifier. The primary Examiner agreed and requested that the Applicant submit the arguments in writing which would result in reopening prosecution. The arguments having now been submitted in writing, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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